Amendments to the Specification:

Page 1, before line 3, the paragraph beginning with "The invention relates" insert the following titles and paragraph:

-- **PRIORITY CLAIM**

This is a U.S. national stage of application No. PCT/DE2003/001779, filed on 30 May 2003. Priority is claimed on the following application(s): Country: Germany, Application No.: 102 27 803.2, Filed: 21 June 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention --

Page 1, before line 13, the paragraph beginning with "An operator control", insert the following title:

-- 2. Description of the Prior Art --

Page 1, before line 37, the paragraph beginning with "The object of the", insert the following title:

-- **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION** --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 37, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- An ~~The~~ object of the invention is ~~therefore~~ to ~~specify~~ provide an operator control element for motor vehicles with which the position of the handle, and thus the set value on the control unit, can reliably and easily be recognized. A further object of the invention is to specify a reliable method for determining the rotary position of a rotatable operator control element. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 6, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The aforementioned object is achieved ~~with~~ by an operator control element of the generic type for motor vehicles in ~~that the~~ in which an illumination device has a plurality of light sources which are arranged radially around the axis of the handle on the fixed base body and can be switched individually[[, a]]. A lightguide element is permanently connected to the handle and has a light input face, which is successively moved past the light sources when the handle rotates, and a light output face, which is assigned to a photosensitive element~~, and the~~. The photosensitive element is connected to an electronic circuit for evaluating the output signal of the photosensitive element, it being possible to determine a rotary position of the handle by successively switching the light sources and evaluating the output signal of the photosensitive element. --

Page 6, before line 23, the paragraph beginning with "The invention is", insert the following title:

-- **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS** --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 23, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The invention is explained in more detail below with reference to an exemplary embodiment and the drawing, in which:

~~figure~~ Fig. 1 ~~shows~~ is a ~~basic~~ sectional view of the operator control element according to the invention, and

~~figure~~ Fig. 2 ~~shows~~ is a plan view of the operator control element. --

Page 6, before line 33, the paragraph beginning with "Figure 1 shows", insert the following title:

-- **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS** --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 33, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Figure 1 ~~shows~~ is a sectional view of an operator control element according to the invention. The operator control element has a fixed base body 1. A handle 3 is mounted so as to be capable of rotating about the base body 1 about an axis 2 by means of the schematically illustrated bearing elements 4. A lightguide element 5, which is embodied here as a rod-shaped

lightguide, but may also be merely composed of mirrored surfaces, is permanently connected to the handle [[2]] 3. The ~~component of the~~ base body 1 ~~is~~ includes a printed circuit board 6 on which a plurality of light sources [[7]] 7a, 7b (collectively referred to as light sources 7) are arranged in a ring around the axis 2. The light source 7b is switched on as a single light source in the example shown. The light of the light source 7b is input into an input face 5a of the ~~light~~ lightguide element 5 and guided to the photosensitive element 8 which is also arranged on the printed circuit board 6. The photosensitive element 8 may be, in particular, a photodiode or a phototransistor. The photosensitive element 8 is arranged on the axis 2 of the handle 3. At the same time, the output face 5b ~~(not illustrated in more detail)~~ of the lightguide element 5 is also arranged on the axis 2 so that, when the handle 3 rotates, the arrangement of the light output face 5b of the lightguide element 5 with respect to the photosensitive element 8 is always ensured. Furthermore, an electronic circuit 9 is arranged on the printed circuit board 6. The electronic circuit 9 is electrically connected to the photosensitive element 8 and evaluates the signals of the photosensitive element 8. Furthermore, the electronic circuit 9 is connected to the individual light sources 7 and supplies actuation signals for switching the light sources 7 on and off. In the fixed base body 1 of the operator control element there are also a plurality of display windows [[10]] 10a, 10b (collectively referred to as display windows 10) which are also arranged on a circular ring around the axis 2. The number of display windows 10 corresponds to the number of light sources 7. The arrangement of the lightguide element 5, of the light source 7b and of the display window 10b is such that part of the light emitted by the light source 7b is input into the lightguide 5 in a corresponding rotary position of the handle 3. At the same time, part of the light of the light source 7b is used to illuminate the display window 10b. This can ensure that the display window 10b is illuminated when the device is operated at night. The same applies to the

other light sources and the associated display windows. However, the lightguide element 5 only ever inputs light from one of the light sources 7 into the photosensitive element 8. --

Please replace the heading on page 9, line 1, with the following amended heading:

-- ~~Patent claims~~ What is claimed is: --

Please amend the Abstract as shown on a separate page thereto.